

# Nanticoke language

**Nanticoke** is an extinct Algonquian language formerly spoken in Delaware and Maryland, United States.<sup>[3]</sup> The same language was spoken by several neighboring tribes, including the Nanticoke, which constituted the paramount chiefdom; the Choptank, the Assateague, and probably also the Piscataway and the Doeg.

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Nanticoke	
<b>Native to</b>	United States
<b>Region</b>	Delaware, Maryland
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Nanticoke people
<b>Extinct</b>	1840s, with the death of Lydia Clark <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Language family</b>	<div>Algic<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Algonquian<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Eastern<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Nanticoke</b></li></ul></li></ul></li></ul></div>
Language codes	
<b>ISO 639-3</b>	nnt
<b>Glottolog</b>	nant1249 <span>(<span>http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/nant1249</span>)</span> <sup>[2]</sup>

## Vocabulary

Nanticoke is sometimes considered a dialect of the Delaware language, but its vocabulary was quite distinct. This is shown in a few brief glossaries, which are all that survive of the language. One is a 146-word list compiled by Moravian missionary John Heckewelder in 1785, from his interview with a Nanticoke chief then living in Canada.<sup>[4]</sup> The other is a list of 300 words obtained in 1792 by William Vans Murray, then a US Representative (at the behest of Thomas Jefferson.) He compiled the list from a Nanticoke speaker in Dorchester County, Maryland, part of the historic homeland.<sup>[5]</sup>

### Nanticoke color words

<b>oaskagu (black)</b>	<b>waappayu (white)</b>
<b>psquaiu (red)</b>	<b>weesawayu (yellow)</b>
<b>ahskahtuckquia (green)</b>	<b>puhsquailoau (blue)</b>

### Nanticoke vocabulary

Air- ayewash

Arm nickpitq

Arrowhead ik-ke-hek

Back daduck-quack

Bad mattitt

Bear winquipim

Crane ah!secque

Creek pamptuckquaskque

Crow kuh!-hos

## Modern Nanticoke

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With the assistance of a native speaker, Myrelene Ranville née Henderson of the Sagkeeng First Nation in Manitoba Canada, who speaks a similar language, Anishnabay, a group of Nanticoke people in Millsboro, Delaware, assembled to revive the language in 2007, using the vocabulary list of Thomas Jefferson. It had been "more than 150 years since the last conversation in Nanticoke took place."<sup>[6]</sup>

## See also

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- Piscataway language

## Notes

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1. "History" (<http://members.tripod.com/~imblackeagle/>), Nanticoke Tribe, accessed 8 Oct 2009
  2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Nanticoke" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/nant1249>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
  3. Raymond G. Gordon Jr., ed. 2005. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*. 15th edition. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics.
  4. Heckewelder, John (2003). *Heckewelder's Vocabulary of Nanticoke* (<https://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1889758302/nativelangu01-20>). American Language Reprints. **31**. Evolution Pub & Manufacturing. ISBN 9781889758305. Retrieved 2012-09-23.
  5. Jefferson, Thomas (2003). *Minor Vocabularies of Nanticoke-Conoy* (<https://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1889758302/nativelangu01-20>). American Language Reprints. Evolution Pub & Manufacturing. ISBN 9781889758459. Retrieved 2012-09-23.
  6. Rachael Jackson (2007-04-29). "Nanticoke try to bring tribe's ancient tongue back" ([http://indiancountrynews.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=281&Itemid=65](http://indiancountrynews.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=281&Itemid=65)). *News From Indian Country*. Retrieved 2012-09-27.
- Vans Murray, William (2009). *A Vocabulary of the Nanticoke Dialect* (<https://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1889758302/nativelangu01-20>). American Language Reprints. Evolution Pub & Manufacturing. ISBN 9780964423435. Retrieved 2012-09-23.

## External links

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- Custom lexicon: The Interactive ALR (<http://www.evolpub.com/interactiveALR/database/CustomLexicon.html>) – includes all known Nanticoke data
- Native Languages of the Americas: Nanticoke (Southern Delaware) (<http://www.native-languages.org/nanticoke.htm>)
- Nanticoke Language [archive] (<http://www.bigorrin.org/archive26.htm>)

- [OLAC resources in and about the Nanticoke language \(http://www.language-archives.org/language/nnt\)](http://www.language-archives.org/language/nnt)
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